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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 PESHAWAR 000518

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2018

TAGS: [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: FATA AND NWFP: INCIDENTS OF TALIBANIZATION: OCTOBER 16 - 31

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REASON: 1.4 (d)

Introduction:

¶1. (C) While fighting remained intense in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), there were some positive developments during the last two weeks of October. Security forces continued to press militants in Bajaur during late October, killing 143 and bringing the total killed during the operation to over 1000 according to Pakistan military, apparently forcing militants, at the end of the month, to seek a ceasefire which the government refused.

¶2. (C) Lashkars and jirgas continued to form in the NWFP and FATA as a consensus seemed to form in several areas that militants must be confronted. The Pak-Afghan jirga in Islamabad on October 27-28 called for a joint strategy to bring peace, including talks with militants in their respective areas of control, with a view to denying sanctuaries for terrorists.

¶3. (C) On October 16, there was a hopeful sign for an end to the sectarian violence in Kurram. A grand jirga of parliamentarians, tribal elders and the political administration brokered a peace deal to end 17 months of war between Shi'a and Sunni sects in the agency. The deal calls for an exchange of bodies, opening of roads, and the return of people to their homes.

Swat: One-Year of Fighting; No End in Sight

¶4. (C) The fighting continued in Swat without significant progress for GOP forces while casualties were inflicted by both sides during late October. Although security forces killed at least 128 militants, the militants continued their "hit-and-run" tactics throughout the valley, killing at least 20 security personnel. Many of the attacks were air or artillery based with other low level fighting accounting for most of the activity reported. This may be a reflection of the current lack of ground forces available from GOP forces for the Swat operation.

October 16: At least four security personnel were killed and 28

others wounded when a police station in Mingora came under rocket attack, followed by a suicide bombing.

October 17: Jets fired 15 to 20 missiles at militant training camps in Jaro Banda, 10 km from the militant headquarters at Peochar, in Matta tehsil, killing at least 60 militants. Militants also hit a security convoy, injuring two, and destroyed a girls' school.

October 18: Security forces reportedly took control of Imam Dheri, hometown of Maulana Fazlullah, without resistance.

October 19: 25 militants and 22 civilians were reportedly killed as fighter jets bombed a Matta village controlled by militants, also damaging a dozen houses.

October 20: Government fired artillery shells hit a residential area in Kabal tehsil, killing at least seven civilians, including a woman and two children, and injuring 13 others.

October 21: Security forces reportedly killed five militants. A remote-controlled bomb killed two security personnel in Sarsinai. 10 others were injured in fighting.

October 22: Fierce fighting left 15 security personnel dead, along with five militants and two civilians. Militants killed the 15 security forces in an ambush in Kabal tehsil.

October 23: Militants beheaded a police officer in Charbagh.

October 24: Militants reportedly killed two people, including a Frontier Corps soldier, and lashed three people for not offering prayers on time.

October 25: At least five persons were killed and 15 others

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wounded in separate incidents in Swat, including one beheading. A college was also torched by militants.

October 26: A tribal force and militants loyal to radical cleric Maulana Fazlullah fought, resulting in five militants killed and 12 jirga members executed.

October 27: A paramilitary soldier, 10 militants and two civilians were reportedly killed, while militants claimed to execute two more hostages.

October 28: Five civilians were killed and 21 injured in shelling on the Kabal area while militants blew up another girls' high school in Odigram, near Mingora.

October 30: Security forces killed more ten militants and injured two others during operations in various areas of Kabal Tehsil.

October 31: Security forces claimed to kill four militants and injure nine others in different parts of Swat. Security forces also moved into Sarasenai, in Kabal tehsil, vacated by militants after talks with a jirga from Kanju convinced them to leave. A report from Dawn, an English language daily, stated that militants had made 140 schools unusable in the last year, mostly in Mata tehsil.

Bajaur: Government Has Militants "On the Run"

15. (C) Security forces claim to inflict significant casualties on militants in Bajaur and have captured the strategic town of Lowi Sam a previous militant strong hold. Some militants in the area agreed to lay down their arms. A local Jirga agreed that anyone sheltering foreigners would be fined, their home would be destroyed and their property would be confiscated.

October 16: Security forces claimed to kill seven militants in daylong shelling by artillery and gunship helicopters in Nawagai

tehsil. Volunteers of tribal lashkars and officials of the political administration also torched several militant houses.

October 17: Security forces claimed that militants were "on the run" as they fled their positions in the Lowi Sam and Charmang areas, abandoning some of their weapons. Security forces reportedly killed 15 militants. Militants burned down the home of a Levy official.

October 18: Airstrikes reportedly killed 13 militants in Nawagai and Mamond. Dozens of houses were also destroyed. The TTP stated that their offer to negotiate was still valid, but they would not lay down their arms.

October 19: Security forces reportedly killed 11 militants and wounded eight others in air strikes.

October 20: Jet fighters and gunship helicopters targeted militants in Charmang and Nawagai, reportedly killing 15.

October 21: Security forces claimed to capture the Lowi Sam area, a militant stronghold, reportedly killing 13 militants. Schools and offices reopened in Khar, the agency headquarters.

October 22: Security forces carried out air strikes on militant positions and claimed to kill as many as 35 fighters.

October 23: Warplanes and gunship helicopters killed more than 35 militants and injured several others in overnight and daylong bombing.

October 24: Security forces killed 14 militants in Nawagai tehsil.

October 26: Security forces reportedly killed 11 militants and injured six others.

October 27: Security forces attacked militants hideouts,

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reportedly killing five militants and injuring several others.

October 28: A large number of militants reportedly surrendered to the Mahmond tribe Lashkar.

October 30: A number of militant commanders in Bajaur attending a jirga of Barmakazai and Oryazai tribes reportedly expressed willingness to unconditionally lay down arms and stop attacks on government personnel and installations. They also promised not to resist security forces entering the area. The jirga agreed that anyone sheltering foreigners would be fined, their home would be destroyed and their property would be confiscated.

October 31: Six people were reportedly killed and five others injured during daylong shelling by jet fighter planes in Nowagai and Mamond tehsils. TTP spokesman Maulvi Omer stated that their offer to negotiate with the government was still valid.

NWFP

16. (C) The following incidents have occurred in the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) and settled areas of the NWFP through October 31:

Lower Dir, October 15: A protest of prisoners, including militants, grew out of control and ended after a nine-hour standoff.

Bannu, October 16: Militants destroyed a police post with six missiles. No police were killed or injured.

Kohat, October 16: Militants continued to fire rockets at Kohat cantonment, targeting security checkpoints in Darra Adam Khel. One rocket landed near a populated area, Railway Colony.

Batkhela, October 19: Militants reportedly blew up a CD shop in Kharkay area of Dargai tehsil.

Derra Ishmael Khan, October 24: Militants kidnapped nine policemen from a checkpoint in Darazinda.

Charsadda, October 26: Militants reportedly killed a woman they had kidnapped for "not bearing a good moral character." The woman's five-year-old son was also kidnapped; his fate is unknown.

Bannu, October 26: Armed men reportedly killed the younger brother of Bailullah Mehsud, head of TTP.

Bannu, October 29: A suicide bomber rammed his explosive-laden Land Cruiser into a barrier established in front of a military checkpoint reportedly killing 14, including eight soldiers, and injuring six others.

Mardan, October 31: A suicide bomber blew himself up in front of the Mardan police chief, killing 11 people, including five policemen, and injuring 24 others.

Peshawar, October 31: Four armed men kidnapped the younger brother of Afghanistan's finance minister in Hayatabad.

Lower Dir, October 31: Paramilitary Dir Scouts reportedly escaped a terrorist attack when a 6 kg roadside bomb exploded after the convoy passed. Elsewhere, police claimed to defuse a 12 kg remote-controlled bomb.

Derra Ishmael Khan, October 31: Unknown militants blew up a CD shop near a police station.

Hangu, October 31: Militants killed a tribal chief and injured his driver while they were traveling to a tribal jirga.

FATA:

17. (C) The following is a roundup of incidents of talibanization

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in FATA's tribal agencies and frontier regions through October 31:

Khyber, October 16: Mohmand Agency based militants led by Abdul Wali have demanded that the Mullagori clan of the Afrid tribe in Khyber allow them to use Khyber Agency as a launching pad for jihad.

North Waziristan, October 16: An Afghan refugee was reportedly beheaded, with a note pinned to his body alleging he was a U.S. spy.

Mohmand, October 16: Militants fired at a military helicopter.

North Waziristan, October 17: Militants reportedly stormed the agency headquarters hospital in Miranshah and kidnapped a program coordinator for the NGO, Save the Children. Militants also executed an Afghan man, accusing him of spying, after cutting off his hands.

North Waziristan, October 21: Militants claimed to capture 30 people who were allegedly spying for the U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

Orakzai, October 23: Militants killed eight pro-government tribesmen, returning from a jirga, in an ambush.

Khyber, October 23: Militants reportedly kidnapped six people in Landi Kotal. Meanwhile, a clash in Bara left at least four dead.

North Waziristan, October 24: Militants reportedly beheaded two men after accusing them of spying.

Khyber, October 25: The political administration closed all educational institutions in the agency, citing deteriorating law and order.

Mohmand, October 27: A suicide bomber blew up his explosive-laden vehicle at a paramilitary checkpoint in northwest Mohmand, reportedly killing ten and injuring five security personnel.

Kurram, October 29: As a sign of their recent truce, both tribal factions in Kurram's long-running sectarian clashes exchanged the remains of their dead.

Mohmand, October 30: Security forces reportedly killed five militants and captured a militant commander, Imran, known as Mansoor, an explosive expert with ties to insurgents in Afghanistan.

FR Kohat, October 31: Brother of taliban commander Mufti Ilyas was found dead in Darra Adam Khel. Last month, his other brother was also found dead.

Government / Military Responses:

18. (C) This is a summary of government and military responses to talibanization according to press reporting and consulate contacts through October 31:

Peshawar, October 16: A spokesman for the NWFP government reportedly stated that the Taliban must lay down their arms before holding talks.

Kurram, October 16: A grand jirga of parliamentarians, tribal elders and the political administration brokered a peace deal to end 17 months of war between Shi'a and Sunni sects. The deal calls for an exchange of bodies, opening of roads, and the return of people to their homes.

South Waziristan, October 16: Six people, including two foreigners, were reportedly killed, and five injured, in the first attack on the Mehsud inhabited Saam area, controlled by taliban commander Baitullah Mehsud.

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Kohat, October 16: The police and Frontier Constabulary (FC) personnel reportedly arrested 40 Uzbek militants leaving Darra Adam Khel at the Gulshan checkpoint and the Kotal Pass, seizing two suicide bombing jackets.

Orakzai, October 16: The political administration gave a four-day deadline for a 30-member jirga of tribesmen to drive out miscreants and their local supporters from the area.

Peshawar, October 17: NWFP Governor Owais Ghani reportedly struck peace deals with militants in North and South Waziristan, brokered through local elders, resulting in factional divides among militants, including in Baitullah Mehsud's organization in South Waziristan. Former Mehsud lieutenant Hafiz Gul Bahadar formed a new organization called Muqami Tehreek-i-Taliban.

Kohat, October 17: The Frontier Constabulary (FC) claimed to arrest 94 militants at checkpoints around the area.

Peshawar, October 18: Security forces arrested 168 foreigners throughout the region, including Uzbeks and Afghans, many of them suspected terrorists.

Kohat, October 20-22: Security forces reportedly arrested over 50 militants, including two commanders, and recovered a huge quantity of arms in the Akhorwal area.

Peshawar, October 22: City police launched a survey of mosques and religious seminaries to identify locations of hardcore

militants, particularly among Afghan refugees.

Derra Ishmael Khan, October 24: The police reportedly defused a bicycle bomb at the market.

Islamabad, October 23: Pakistan's government announced that it is planning to supply assault rifles to thousands of tribesmen willing to join Lashkars and take up arms against militants.

Peshawar, October 30: Police launched an operation against kidnappers and kidnapping rings. At least 78 people have been kidnapped in the last 10 months.

Khyber, October 31: According to some tribesmen, the political administration has reportedly backed Mangal Bagh-led Lashkar-i-Islam (LI) to eliminate rival militants in Jamrud tehsil.

South Waziristan, October 31: Months of negotiations between the government and Baitullah Masud-led militants led to a prisoner exchange of 19 Frontier Corps soldiers and 21 militants.

Grassroots Efforts to Halt Talibanization

19. (SBU) The following events are examples of activities taken by local communities to halt the spread of talibanization through October 31:

Shangla, October 16: A grand jirga vowed to purge the area of miscreants and formed a group of 700 volunteers.

North Waziristan, October 17: Local militants reportedly pledged not to fight Pakistani forces in the area because by doing so they "will be helping the Americans."

Lower Dir, October 17: One of the two Chinese engineers kidnapped on August 29 escaped from his captors.

Swat, October 24: A jirga of over 4,000 tribal elders gave militants a three-day deadline to leave the area or face a Lashkar.

Mohmand, October 31: Militants released three Frontier Corps soldiers, after a jirga. Two were captured ten months ago, one in August.

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Khyber, October 31: Local tribesmen in Landikotal reportedly foiled a bid to kidnap the owner of a filling station.
TRACY